DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 202 465 IR 009 337

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TITLE Historical Photographs: A County-Wide Organization.
INSTITUTION State Univ. of New York, Fredonia. Coll. at Fredonia.
PUB DATE 79
NOTE 50p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Archives; *Cataloging; Copyrights; History; Librarians; *Library Collections; Library Networks; Library Role; *Library Technical Processes; *Photographs; *Preservation; User Satisfaction (Information)

ABSTRACT

This basic outline for the organization of photograph collections is designed for use by individual agencies as well as by people interested in a cooperative collection organization that can encompass a regional network. The working manual provides organizational techniques for the evaluation of historical, monetary, and other values of the collection; the cataloging and subject classification of individual photographs, photographs in series or in "browsing" groups, and portraits; the physical organization and storage of original or archival prints, negatives, and the records generated for them; and the preservation of archival copies, provision of a user file, and copy print reproduction. The impact of copyright laws on the copying of photographs is briefly discussed. A pilot project tested the validity of these guidelines at the Fenton Historical Society in Jamestown, New York. (Author/MER)

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# HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPHS:

# A COUNTY-WIDE

# ORGANIZATION

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ABSTRACT

The importance of historical photographs is rapidly growing in the information producing media. Photograph-holding agencies, especially historical societies, libraries and archives, need to organize their photograph collections to provide easy access for the interested clientele.

This article is a basic outline for the organization of photograph collections. It is particularly designed for individual agencies, and for anyone interested in a cooperative collection organization that can encompass a regional network. The following organizational techniques are discussed:

- the evaluation of historical, monetary and other values of the collection;
- the cataloging and subject classification of individual photographs, photographs in series or in "browsing" groups, and portraits;
- the physical organization and storage of original or archival prints, negatives, and the records generated for them,
- the concerns of archival copy preservation, provision for a user's file, and copy print reproduction;
- the practicality of a computerized network-wide union list of valuable photograph holdings.

This article covers a wide variety of organizational elements. An agency should use only those elements that are pertinent to enhance the value and the usefulness of a collection that may not be evident without proper control and maintenance.

The history of photography dates back to 1839, when the first chemically fixed image was produced on a piece of highly polished silver-plated copper by the French L.J.M. Daguerre. After its inventor this image was named daguerreotype. This discovery soon was followed by various efforts of other pioneers in the field, who devoted much time to the refinement of each new process from which the present day photographic technique evolved. Some of these early processes were the ambriotype, aristotype, tintype, lantern slide, and glass plate.[1] Modern photographic techniques have also produced a variety of species, of which some soon may prove to be of a long lasting quality. To achieve an infinitely lasting image is the ultimate aim of constant experiments.

Since the discovery of photography thousands and thousands of photographs capture and attempt to preserve all aspects of our lives and surroundings around us. These pictures are also integral parts of the entire information producing media. Press releases, television, motion pictures, and other specially designed visual communications depend on the image-producing power of photography. Institutions of all sorts, particularly libraries, archives, historical societies, educational, social religious and business organizations house great masses of photographs that have been produced within the past 140 years. Many of these photographs have historical value, as they capture public events. Others offer unique sensations of aesthetic beauty. Still others preserve the protraits of

important people of past generations, as well as common folks in their habitations. Yet, in spite of much recent research concerned with the elimination of fugitive chemical elements that affect the longevity of the image, these photographs are destined to self-destruct eventually, by virtue of their chemical composition.

Furthermore, the life expectancy of photographs is shortened by abusive handling, careless use, and maintenance that reflects ignorance, neglect, and indifference. It is the duty of those housing agencies that are the keepers of these photcgraphs to find the proper way to preserve this important medium. Chemical and physical preservation should be the primary concern. It should be coupled with the meaningful organization of the collections. Once these steps are taken the collection is ready to be made available to the general public, who in turn, can use the photographs for their interest, need, and benefit.

The following paper offers some guidelines toward the organization of photograph collections particularly in Chautauqua county, New York. It is believed that the existing collections in this county have considerable value in supporting local history. This value should be further enhanced by a cooperative county-wide effort of proper organization of the collections in order to prepare the photographs to receive a wider, a more efficient, and a well deserved use. It is also hoped that the pattern set up for this county can be used for other counties,

townships, and various networks where valuable photograph collections are scattered and often cast aside, waiting for someone to reveal their value to the community.

EVALUATION

A mere collection of photographs stacked up in a dusty corner in an otherwise well functioning library or archives has little, if any value, to the community that could be a potential user if the photographs were well organized and easily retrievable. On the other hand, not every collection of photographs is worth the time, money, and effort of detailed organization. Therefore, the most important first step is to define the value of the collection, and the need for a most advantageous method of organization.

The evaluation of a photo collection involves a number of criteria, which depends on the location, the use, and the longevity of the collection. According to Renata Shaw of the Library of Congress, the organization and "the cataloging process is so expensive that the image must possess historical, artistic, documentary or monetary value to receive" professional attention. This sort of value judgement is particularly true at places where large collections of photos have to be maintained. For instance, the "limited amount of usefulness" is taken into consideration at The Washington Star, where approximately 300 photos are received daily. Of these, about 100 will be filed into their "PERSONALITY" file, another 80

will go under pertinent subject headings, and the rest end up in a "DISCARD" file. These "discards" are reappraised a year later, at which time a final decision of elimination or retention is made.[2]

Photograph collections in smaller libraries require an entirely different set of rules for value designation. Often snapshots of local amateur photographers, who focus their attention "on the people, events and surroundings that affected their lives" have lasting value for the preservation and appreciation of visual history of the locality. For future generations these "photographs provide the means by which the growth and development of their community can be assessed."[3] From this point of view the photo collections at local historical societies are of major importance to their communities. This importance is further enhanced in communities where a rich and varied historical background can be claimed.

In this respect Chautauqua county can serve as a prime example. The active history of the county dates back to the period of Indian occupation, which was followed by several outstanding historical events that shaped the county, and in certain respect the nation as well. The periods that have been captured by the visual preservation of photographs include the beginning of the Chautauqua Institution, the formation of Lily Dale, a religious community, and the founding of various manufacturing companies of which some gained nation-wide, and even international recognition. This is unquestionably so in

the case of the Brooks Locomotive Works in Dunkirk, and some furniture and piano companies in Jamestown.

Furthermore, images of some prominent architecture, including early mills, residences, schools, churches, lighthouses, and various other structures of historical significance in the county which have been captured on photographs, should be preserved as future evidences of days gone by. This is particularly important in the era of urban renewal when many historical buildings have to give way to modern needs and improvements. This continuing need for photographic preservation should alert present-day photographers to fulfill their mission that includes the needs of the future as well as that of the present. To these types of historic collections, the portrait presentations of the county's prestigious, and famous personalities are to be added. Photographs that captured innumerable events in the communities, and the wealth and the beauty of the county, also should be sought, collected, preserved, and made available for public use. Existing collections of professional photographers of the past and the present should receive special attention and care.

At the same time, it should be recognized that not every photograph in a county is worthy of special attention. Many images are mere repetitions of already captured sights and events. The subject composition of others would offer little or no use to any area of interest. While others, due to their physical and chemical state no longer can be considered as

meaningful additions. Hence, a careful selection of a core collection of true value should receive prime consideration for systematic organization. Photographs of peripheral or ephemeral interests should be kept in groups as "browsing" collections, and cataloged as a series related to pertinent subject interest. Also, scanty collections of photographs that illustrate the history of another locality, should be transferred to that locality. In the place of their origin these photographs will prove to be more useful.

With this important issue of image preservation in mind it is the responsibility of each agency to take a serious look at the photograph collections presently in their possession. To arrive at some constructive decision concerning the future of their collections these housing agencies should consider the following questions:

1. What is the scope and the historical or other value of the existing collection?
2. What are the plans to establish a systematic method of organization?
3. What amount of time and money can be allocated to the effort of organizing the collection?
4. What kind of clientele is likely to use the collection and for what purpose?
5. What method of dissemination would be most successful?
6. Are there any specific plans to enlarge the size, or to widen the scope of the collection?

Once these questions are answered the next step is to find an appropriate way to organize and preserve the collection. The major objectives of the system should be:

a. low cost

b. easy access

c. reduced handling of original or vintage prints.[4]

The objectives may look simple on the surface, yet such simplicity is deceiving, as the following considerations indicate:

a. Regardless how basic the organization of a photograph collection is, it is rather costly! It should be remembered that a considerable amount of time and manpower is needed to organize the collection. A certain amount of supply material is also necessary. Therefore, without adequate financial support an adequate system cannot be designed.

b. It is of utmost importance that the public can "see" the photographs. No verbal description of any cataloger can reveal the hidden details of an image that can be most valuable to the user. Therefore, "visible image access" is strongly suggested. There are a number of varieties of various costs and techniques that will be cited later. At the same time, the cataloger's description, or caption, and the subject classification should be clear and simple to all users, not only to the specialist. Each of these steps are time consuming, therefore, rather costly.

c. Ideally, originals, also known as archival or vintage prints, should be handled only by the trained personnel for

reproduction if a negative of it does not exist. Negatives should never be handled by the public. Therefore, a "copy print" file of all negatives is highly desirable. However, the cost of providing such a file is not to be forgotten.

ORGANIZATION

The organization, the cataloging, and the classification of a photograph collection is not an easy task. It requires specialized skills which, in a typical small library, archives, or historical society, especially in a county environment, rarely exist. Unlike other historical documents that speak for themselves, the cataloger has to "tell" certain facts about a photographic image. The technical and chemical properties that are an integral part of the handling of photographs are important and determining factors. These aspects have major bearing on storage and preservation, but are beyond the scope of this presentation, aside from occasional references to proper observation of preservation requirements. The available literature on photograph cataloging reveals that there is no standard way of cataloging in the United States and Canada. However, there are several well established methods that work well in the various libraries and archives where they were developed and applied. Such is the case at the Wisconsin Historical Society, Newark Public Library, University of Oklahoma Library, Wells Fargo Bank History Room, The International Museum of Photography at the Eastman House

in Rochester, New York, and numerous other places of various sizes and interests.[5] Presently, the International Federation of Library Association is developing a form of information control for all media called the International Standards Bibliographic Description of Non-Book material (ISBD-NBM). The University of British Columbia Library developed a system based on ISBD-NBM by making several changes to accomodate their needs.[6] To adapt their system to the needs of a county-wide photograph collection organization, further changes would have to be made. Naturally, the ISBD-NBM system, which is not even geared toward photograph cataloging specifically, would be a somewhat cumbersome example to be followed by a county-wide network of small historical societies and libraries. The Anglo-American Cataloging Rules would present an equally complicated method of organizing and cataloging small photo collections. Therefore, it is most sensible to study some well functioning systems established for similar collections, and design a feasible and acceptable method that best suits the local needs.

The mechanical aspects of the general organization of county-wide photographic collections can be based upon already established patterns. The following basic steps should be considered initially:

1. Set up a master file of original or vintage photographs,
2. Set up a description, or caption file,
3. Set up a subject file,

4. Set up a file of negatives,

5. Set up a subject authority file, or list,

6. Set up a users file of all existing photographic images.

Each participating library in the county should follow the same pattern. The number of these files can vary to fulfill the local needs. However, it is strongly suggested that at least the first three files be established. These individually prepared files would be coordinated eventually, to form a county-wide union list of historic photographs. As a later step, the information contained in these files could be transferred to computer readable form, and a final union list of the county's holdings could be printed by computer method. Computer lists could likewise be produced for the individual libraries. However, the initial manual organization must precede this step.

Finally, it is to be understood that these guidelines cannot be followed as a step-by-step sequence of organization. These steps merely outline what the result of a lengthy, time-consuming effort of meaningful collection coordination should be. This coordination requires persons who are well acquainted with the collections, and who have some knowledge of local history as well as some training in cataloging. This requirement will be more evident in the discussion of the assigning of subject headings.

CATALOGING SINGLE IMAGES

Some basic steps of cataloging single photographic images:

1. Assign accession number, (for museums it is also called entering, or registering)
2. Establish caption, or description information,
3. Set up subject headings,
4. Add location information,
5. Compile a subject authority file.

The consolidation of some of these steps is possible and feasible. This is particularly true if the collection is small and consists mostly of unidentified photographs. This is often the case in small historical societies and public libraries where a large group of "inherited" miscellaneous photographs of unknown origin exists. In addition, it is important to note that this section deals with the cataloging of a single image. This method of cataloging and classifying single images has been derived from several articles that deal with photograph collections of various sizes and types.[7]

Accessioning

A photograph is accessioned when a number in numerical sequence is assigned to it at the time of its receipt, or at the time of the commencement of its systematic organization. The accession number is the permanent identification number of each photograph. Accession numbers should be controlled by the maintenance of an accession file, log book, or ledger.

The accession number could be a composite of the last two digits of the calendar year in which the item is accessioned and the actual numerical sequence number. Special collections that are to be kept together could receive one accession number to which item numbers are added. However, this will result in a constant repetition of almost identical numbers. Or, to retain simplicity, each item can be accessioned separately in proper sequence. The assigned block of accession numbers then will keep the collection together.

| Examples: | Accession number with item numbers annexed | Accession numbers without item numbers |
|---|---|---|
| | 78-2752/1 | 78-2752 |
| | 78-2752/2 | 78-2753 |
| | 78-2752/3 etc. | 78-2754 etc. |

Museums and historical societies where all items received are accessioned, could maintain the established sequence for photographs as well. If desired, a special code of "P" or "Ph" can be assigned for photograph entries. The assigned accession number must appear on all copy prints, negatives, and other information pertinent to a single image. Copies of the same image, generated from the same negative, receive the same accession number with copy numbers assigned in production sequence, if such sequence can be detected.

Caption writing

The caption information is the source of technical identification that contains all known technical and processing

information of a photographic image. When compiling caption information the following questions should be answered:

Who--took the photograph?

What--is the subject of the image?

Why--was the photo taken?

When--was it taken?

Where--is the location of the scene on the image?

How--was the photograph processed?

To the results of these questions some other descriptive elements should be added. Some of these are the following:

a.) The source of the photograph--the manufacturer, donor,

b.) The physical description -- the type of photographic process, dimensions, perhaps framed, mounted, oversized, was it displayed when and where,

c.) Information of the negative -- This includes the chemical properties, the processing techniques, the size, the negative number if one was assigned by the photographer,

d.) Location information of the image, the negative, other related material within the housing agency.

e.) Image content can be expressed by such categories as: historic, artistic, scenic, or other special characteristics.

f.) Note: information on the donor, restrictions of usage and reproductions related information.

The compiled information should be organized in the following pattern:

title of the image accession number_____

photographer

subject of the image

place of image

date of image

physical description

manufacturer

negative information

origin of image (donor or purchase, or other)

image content

notes

One should identify as many as possible of these elements. If the date and the place of the image cannot be found easily a reasonable amount of search should be conducted. If the given information is questionable, it should be so noted. Often exact dates are impossible to obtain, therefore, a span of years, such as 1890's, or "about the 1890's" should be added. The accession numbers must appear on all caption cards. In fact, it is practical to file caption cards by the accession numbers.

Caption information can be maintained in a number of ways. If the decision is made to keep captions with the prints and with the negatives, proper preservation specifications must be observed. Captions can be kept with the negatives if they are typed on acid free paper and filed in front of each negative envelope. The negative envelope can also carry the

caption information. Some libraries may film the captions, splice the films and keep each caption in the pertinent negative envelope. Others might copy captions on the margins of the negatives with special india ink. Captions can be written on the verso of mounted prints. If prints are not mounted soft lead pencils must be used so that the image surface is not damaged. Pressure sensitive labels should never be used as they dry up and also contain harmful chemicals. Neither should one use any sort of stamps or pens on photographic prints.

In reference to the often misconceived idea of photograph identification it should be understood that "the essential function of the caption is to enable one to file and find a print. The purpose is not to convey 'researched' information compiled by the caption writers. A good caption gives the essential leads required by a user who wishes to find out more about the subject himself."[8] In other words, the caption writer is not to put the photograph into a specific historical framework. The historical identification is the responsibility of the historian, or the researcher who is familiar with the subject or the area which the photograph is to enhance visually. In the case of a community collection it is up to the local historians, the geneologists, and other professionals to add historical dimensions to existing photographs.[9] A well-meaning cataloger, without adequate knowledge in local

history can often mislead the specialist by assigning wrong dates, places or events to photographic images. After the discovery of wrong information the correction can mean the loss of valuable time by the specialist. If the wrong information is not discovered in time, the researcher can suffer considerable public embarrassment.[10]

Title

The assigment of the title is one of the most important element on the caption notation. Yet a title does not often appear on photographs. Therefore, it is mostly the responsibility of the cataloger to find an appropriate one. According to David Mattison and Saundra Sherman at the University of British Columbia:

> there are no inflexible rules regarding what constitutes the title of a photograph, so it is a purely pragmatic decision: if something looks like a title, it is used. It may be found either on the back or the front of a photograph. If there is no title, one is supplied describing as objectively as possible the image content. If a photograph has a title which does not accurately describe the image, an element of description called 'other title information' is used to record this information.[11]

More precisely, if the given title is too subjective or a purely personalized one, like "Linda with baby Ann" depicting two

children in a street scene, the following more descriptive "other title information" should be assigned: "Two children on Main Street in Westfield." If the children can be identified by their family names the even more specific title of "The Baker children on Main Street in Westfield" should be given. However, both the original and the given title should always be recorded on the caption card.

Subject Headings

The assignment of subject headings is the most difficult task that faces a cataloger of a historic photograph collection. There are two major methods of subject designation and maintenance that are presently used for library material classification:

(1.) The dictionary style. designed by Charles A. Cutter and
(2.) alphabetico-classed method, developed by the Library of Congress.

These two systems use different entry words for the same specific subject heading. Both of them harbor inherent complications and inadequacies from the user's point of view.

1., <u>The dictionary style</u> method uses a direct approach, therefore, it is more specific and simpler to locate a narrow subject. However, it does not group together similar generic subjects. Specific narrow subject headings are filed in a straight alphabetical order interspersed with a variety of

unrelated subjects around them.

2., The alphabetico-classed method requires a kind of categorical thinking from a broader subject concept to a narrower, more specific one. It collocates similar subjects into a string of primary--secondary--tertiary subject designation forms in which the most specific term comes at the end. The advantage is that it brings together similar generic subjects. The disadvantage is that of complexity. The narrower subjects cannot always be found directly; "see also" and "cross reference"-s are abundant; subject inversions are not consistent. Clearly, this method creates many difficulties for the users.[12]

Examples of ANIMALS and TRANSPORTATION subject listings by (1) the dictionary style and by (2) the alphabetico-classed style.

1., CARS
CATS
DOGS
ELECTRIC TROLLIES
FERRIES
GOATS
STEAM BOATS
TRAINS

2., ANIMALS--CATS
--DOGS
--GOATS

TRANSPORTATION--AIR--PLANES
--LAND--CARS
--ELECTRIC
TROLLIES
--WATER--FERRIES
--STEAM BOATS

Note that the alphabetico-classed example is a simplified version for ANIMALS. In actuality it would be:

ZOOLOGY--MAMMALS--DOMESTIC ANIMALS--CATS.

To develop a set of meaningful subject headings for historical photographs it may be necessary to use some aspects of each method. For instance, in Chautauqua County early rail road arteries passed through. It is also an area surrounded by lakes and rivers that were used as frontier waterways. Therefore, the evolution of transportation is an important indication of the county's historical development. Hence, it is highly desirable to group into a coherent unit the representatives of all transportation media. This may not be necessary in a land-bound rural county. There, perhaps some agricultural specialties will call for collocated subject treatment. Under any circumstances, for any locality, a special set of subject headings have to be prepared. Jane Howe from the University of Oklahoma clearly states this fact: "There are printed subject indexes, but often these are too large and/or too complicated for local use. Here at the University, a subject index has been compiled for the peculiar needs of the Division of Manuscripts. Colloqiual terms are used" to make the subject headings more pertinent to the collection.[13]

At the same time, it is also true that a wide concept general grouping of generic subject headings for a typical

average photograph collection can be arranged in like fashion. The traditional approach recently outlined by Enid T. Thompson in his new manual for librarians, called LOCAL HISTORY COLLECTIONS still prevails, and can be assigned to groups of photographs with no particular significance. Most historical societies and libraries have groups of photographs that can be fit into such general headings as "GENERAL HISTORY" and "PLACES" and "PEOPLE" and "EVENTS," and may not deserve more specific treatment. Enid T. Thompson also suggests that for practical purposes "the list of subject headings for photos, for ephemera, for monographs must all be the same. The headings must grow out of the materials available in the collection, and must be unique to and illustrative of the locale and the collection."[14] To achieve this goal may be feasible up to a certain point only. Many historical societies and libraries follow already established classification systems for their book collection. They may have a workable system set up for various types of other materials as well. If the subject matter of their photograph collection fits into the already established system they should integrate them, as described by Thompson. Each photograph and its accompanying negative and copy print should still be identified individually by accession number and caption information under such wide concept general subject grouping. However, it is the opinion of this writer that photograph collections are unique image

carrying representatives of history, therefore, they should receive separate treatment.

Some libraries may wish to add certain "pictures" and other reproductions to the photograph collections. It is feasable only if the related media does not overwhelm the importance of the photographs. On the other hand, it is imperative that related information in any other form be correlated with the photographs. Also other photographs elsewhere in the collection should be correlated with an important image. The "note" section on the caption card is a practical place to cite such information.

Regardless of how precise the subject headings are they should be coordinated with "see also" and "cross reference"-s. This time-consuming step is necessary to link together certain subjects and to refer the users to other related ones. The "see also" reference directs the user to related or more specific headings. The "cross reference" points the user toward various aspects of a given subject that are scattered elsewhere in the card catalog. The most important concerns for setting up subjects headings are the knowledge of the collection, the users' interests and approach, and the consistency and proficiency of the cataloger. It is also important that the subject headings be so designed that constant additions can be made without much reorganization of the existing headings. Ample room should be provided for future growth, especially for this medium with which the present and

the future will be so profusely recorded. Some librarians may see the need to develop a system of subject classification with numerical, or alpha-numerical codes assigned similar to that of Dewey, Cutter, Library of Congress, or other classification tables. This sub-system should not interfere with the establishment of subject headings. The subject headings should stand as agreed upon by the collaborating libraries. These agreements should be maintained as eventually the established subject headings will constitute a county-wide subject authority file.

CATALOGING PHOTOGRAPHS IN GROUPS OR SERIES

The cataloging of individual photographs, a detailed, time-consuming, and costly processing is not always necessary. It is particularly true, if a library possesses a large amount of miscellaneous photographs with peripheral interest to local history. Such photos can be amassed in "browsing" groups and divided into broad collective subject areas, depending on the nature of the collection. Photographs of artistic nature, which offer little documentary revelation beyond the photographer's attribute to aesthetic appreciation, are likely candidates for "browsing" collections.

A collection by, or the life time output of a single photographer, likewise requires special organization. These photographs, unless they number only a few, should always be

kept in a separate series. A special subject breakdown should reflect the artist's specialization. If a chronological presentation enhances the photographer's accomplishment and artistic development, that arrangement should be maintained. In any event, a "Guide to the Collection," even if it is a simple listing of the individual images, should be made available to aid the public.[15]

A so-called series card is suggested for browsing groups of special photograph collections. This card would list the span of accession numbers, the assigned broad subject divisions, and any other pertinent information that would help the user to define the nature of that collection. In a small local historical society collective cataloging of a variety of miscellaneous photos is often highly desirable. If the historic or any other value of a collection is rather limited, accessioning may also not be necessary. Broad subject headings to guide the browsers, however, should be assigned.

PORTRAITS

The cataloging of portraits presents a major problem only if a large number of portraits cannot be identified. Portrait identification must precede the cataloging process. Unidentified portraits, unfortunately, can only end up in a "MISCELLANEOUS" or "UNIDENTIFIED" folder at the end of the portrait file, or at the beginning of it as "ANONYMOUS" portraits. At times there

may be a question of what exactly a portrait is. The International Museum of Photography manual directs the cataloger to concentrate on the photographer's original intent, and on the milieu into which the person on the image is placed.[16] An intelligent decision should be made easily if one asks: was this photo taken to capture the identity of a person, or was it taken to show the person in a special surrounding, or in some other artistic presentation? Identified portraits should always be arranged in a straight alphabetical order by the proper name of the person presented on the image. Under special circumstances, and in cases of an extremely large portrait collection, a broad subject division by occupation, location or other criterion could be developed. Within this scheme the material in a certain subdivision should likewise retain an alphabetical sequence.

It may be desirable to group related photographs with the portraits, or correlated with them, particularly in the case of prominent personalities. If the supplementary collection to a portrait is substantial, the implementation of a chronological or topical sub-system of filing may be practical. The supplementary photos could be divided by: family relations, business connections, public appearances, and other suitable divisions. A portrait collection can be greatly enhanced by the coordination of related material that is available in the library in non-pictorial form. Letters, diaries, business

correspondence, or any other information should be noted on the caption card. Without a complete "picture" of an individual the researcher will not be able to gather a complete history. Some librarians may decide to keep a straightforward portrait collection and file the rest of the "people" photographs under a general "PEOPLE" heading. In this case, however, "see also" references should guide the users to the separate locations.

NEGATIVES

Negatives are a major concern to conservation specialists, yet they offer little complexity from the cataloger's point of view. If the photograph collection consists of several series with accompanying negatives that were enumerated by the original photographers, the negatives should be filed by that number, and kept in separate sets of series. In this case the caption card should record the negative number besides the notation of its size, type, and its location. If too many negatives lack that special number the cataloger should file them by the accession number that was assigned to that particular image. Ideally a copy print of each negative should be placed into the user's file. The caption information should be readily available for easy matching when reproductions are requested. For libraries where reproduction requests are frequent it is practical to have a copy of the caption adjacent to the negative. Although, by using the caption card

file any negative should be easy to retrieve.

The peculiar chemical properties of the negative require special storage, special care, and special handling. It is of utmost importance that the storage facilities meet all preservation requirements for purposes of longevity, as well as for safety. Nitrate base negatives should never be filed with any other types of negatives due to their low combustability threshold.

Examples of early "photographic" images such as daguerreotype, ambriotype, aristotype, tintype, glass plate, lantern slide, and the more modern film slides due to their special sizes, and other unique physical characteristics, always require special storage facilities. Therefore, it is imperative that the location stations be clearly recorded. It is most desirable to make copy prints of these special varieties so that any unnecessary handling is eliminated.[17] If a particular library has an extensive variety of these historical examples they could be so organized as to reflect the history of the development of photography. This could be done on a general level, or if a locality played a significant role in the development of photography, the collection organization should enhance that valuable historic event. This is true in the city of Jamestown, Chautauqua county, where the original American Aristotype Company spread to three city blocks. The Company's President, George Eastman, eventually moved the

industry to Rochester, New York, where eventually it gained international fame.[18]

ORGANIZATION OF INFORMATION

Once the cataloging of a photograph collection is completed, the next step is the organization of the gathered information and the physical organization of the collection. The method of information organization should be chosen to provide easy access to the collection. It should be simple and logical to all users. In a small library for an average size photo collection the maintenance of three basic files should be adequate:

1. The caption card file. It should be filed in numerical order by the accession number. It could contain all necessary information on the donor, and other "in house" notation. If a museum or historical society requires a separate donor file, donor cards for photographs should be integrated therein.
2. Subject file. This file should be an alphabetical file containing all subject cards, title cards of some images if such is desired, name cards for portraits, series cards of special groups of photographs, photographer's cards, "see also" and "cross reference" cards. Guide cards to "browsing" collections should be filed in this file also. The subject cards should carry a simplified version of the caption information. The accession number, the negative number, if

given, and the location information must be noted on every card.

3. The subject authority file. This file should be valuable to the catalogers to keep a uniform set of subject headings. It should be helpful to patrons to become familiar with the applied subject headings. It is of major importance if a county-wide organization is the ultimate goal as the compilation of the individual subject authority files eventually would merge into a cumulative subject authority file for the entire county's use.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COLLECTION

The physical arrangement of the collection can be done in a number of ways. Much depends on what method is feasible financially. If it is at all possible a master or archival file of all original or vintage prints should be kept. This file should not be subjected to constant public use and abuse, as that eventually would lead to premature deterioration of the entire collection. Archival files could also be preserved on microforms or on slides. If the images are kept in accession number order, the retrieval would be rather simple. The general public should be provided with a working file of some sort. Possible varieties of these will be discussed under "Visible image files."

Photographs in unconventional forms and sizes often cause

concern of proper representation in the general files. Oversized, framed, permanently displayed, and other forms of photographic images should be reduced or enlarged photographically to filing size. Proper location information of the original is to be noted on the copy print and on the caption card. If this somewhat costly method is not possible, special "dummy" notes should be used to "block" the files at appropriate places to alert the users that additional images are available elsewhere.

Extensive discussion on the actual storing of images is beyond the scope of this paper. However, it is important to emphasize that the chosen storage facilities should meet all required preservation specifications. Containers, such as folders, files, envelopes, sleeves, jackets, and boxes for storing negatives, prints and other photographic media, should be purchased from reputable archival or photography supply companies. Several publications give detailed media with proper storing techniques.[19]

MICROFILM REPRODUCTION

Regradless of the amount of preservation precaution and preparation, the self-destructive chemical elements that are inherent in photographic techniques seriously limit the life expectancy of photographs. Therefore, several microform reproduction methods can be used to extend the life of these

unique history supporting visual images. Preserving and storing photographs on microcards, microfiche, and microfilms offer certain advantages, though at a high price, because it requires special production, special viewing, and special reproduction mechanisms. The updating of the collection on reels of films would likewise create another challenge. Eventually, a series of occasional supplementary films would disect the collection unless the more effective, but still problematic method of constant splicing, or stripping and jacketing the film technique is used. Furthermore, several recent studies strongly question the archival quality, and life expectancy of some, presently in use, microfilms. The usefulness of material stored on microforms without adequate indexing has also been scrutinized.[20] In short, traditional microfilming for preservation and storage may also not be the ultimate answer to photograph preservation. For those who decide on microfilming, the professional literature explores various aspects of microform reproduction. It provides numerous cost studies with the citation of equipment of a variety of capacities, and production capabilities.[21]

For county-wide comprehensive photograph collection preservation the county should provide financial support to carry out the project. Presently, numerous counties are conducting the microfilming of local history material. Many networks enjoy state, if not federal funding support.

Photographic collection preservation should be considered simultaneously, or as a next step in the preservation project.

VISIBLE IMAGE FILES

The best way to save an original photograph file from public handling is to provide a system which includes a so-called "visible image file." There are several ways to achieve this ideal method of bringing the photograph collection visually in contact with the prospective users. The basic principle of all visible image files is the provision of an extra copy of the photograph for the sole purpose of exposing the collection to the public. There are several ways to provide such files. The best, and most practical ones are those that do not require the use of any technical device for image projection. Clearly, if a collection is made available to the public on aperture cards, slides, or on microforms, a viewer and a printer has to be made available also. These methods are costly, the machinery requires constant maintenance, and the collection has to be stationed adjacent to the viewing apparatus.

There are a number of different ways of presenting a photograph collection to the public that do not require additional viewing instruments. The Public Archives of Canada prepares visual catalog cards. Each catalog card has a miniature 3x5 copy of the image it represents. The Latter-Day Saints Church

Archives uses microfilm strips that are printed on 8 1/2x11 contact sheets which are kept in three-ring binders arranged by subject. Each of these methods include image identification, and location information. Therefore, the users consult only one file to gain all required information. Oversized, displayed, and other specially preserved images can likewise be included. With this comprehensive collection dissemination method only a moderate amount of reference service is required.[22]

One of the most practical, the most economical and most flexible "visual photograph finding aid" has been developed by the Yukon Archives in Canada. The actual production of this method consists of the xeroxing of photographs, along with the caption cards on legal size sheets. The sheets then are bound in Accopress binders by subject divisions. Several sets of these "binders" were assembled and distributed at major users interest locations among the regional library network participants. According to Linda Johnson at the Yukon Archives, shortly after the binders were distributed the requests for photographs doubled, and soon the invested production cost was reimbursed with payments made by the users for copy print purchases.[23]

For a county-wide network system this realtively low cost dissemination service of xeroxed images would be most beneficial, and it would have far reaching possibilities. It would reveal a valuable collection of photographs of local

history for educational, cultural, and even commercial purposes. A limited number of binders could be produced and deposited at geographically well chosen cultural centers, where the public could easily consult them. For a number of practical and economic reasons, it is suggested that each participating library, archives, and historical society select a core collection of the most suitable and most valuable photographs for inclusion of such county-wide dissemination. The "browsing" groups of limited use and value should be maintained as auxiliary collections at each location. Appropriate "series" notations would be made to this effect in the county-wide photograph union list under pertinent subject headings.

## COMPUTERIZED INDEXING

An integral part of the cataloging process is to bring out special characteristics of a collection and introduce them to the users. These special characteristics in case of a photograph collection are considerably more varied. In a manual system the cataloger's purpose is achieved by the preparation of files that contain caption notation, subject designation, and other necessary information. The possibility of bringing the users in connection with the actual photographs by way of a visible image file, or by making the original collection available for public use, means that an ideal service is provided.

With the advancement of technology the manual method of indexing can be converted into computer readable information, which, eventually, would provide a more systematic, and a more uniform way of information dissemination. For the purpose of computerization a well-defined, flawless manual system is the first and most important step. The integrated uniformity enables the programmer, who may not be totally familiar with the details of the collection organization, to set up codes for recurring elements. With the help of these codes a more economical, a more precise, and a less voluminous, final computer produced index of existing photographs would result.

For computerized indexing, in addition to the organization and cataloging of the collection, several sets of identifying codes have to be assigned. Specific codes are required to designate the following aspects of a photograph collection: (1) image content descriptors, (2) designators of original processing technique, (3) special physical characteristics, (4) "union" list location codes, and perhaps other desired elements. Ideally, in order to achieve a uniform system, the finalization of these codes should come before the manual processing of the collection is initiated, although the codes can be assigned at any stage of the processing. All participating libraries should come to an agreement concerning the codes to be used, and thereafter they should abide by their

decision if a well-coordinated county-wide system is the ultimate goal. To illustrate the types of codes that should be considered, the following possibilities are suggested:

Image content descriptors:

HIS.....History supportive

ART.....Artistic value

SCE.....Scenic presentation

PRT.....Portrait Etc....

Designators of original processing technique

AMB.....Ambriotype

DAG.....Daguerreotype

ARI.....Aristotype

TIN.....Tintype

LSL.....Lantern slide

GLA.....Glass plate

NIT.....Nitrate film

SAF.....Safety film

CVD.....Carte de visite

STE.....Stereoscope

PCD.....Post card

BAW.....Black and white

COL.....Color

FSL.....Film slide, Etc....

Union list location codes

DHS.....Dunkirk Historical Society

FHS.....Fenton Historical Society

CHI.....Chautauqua Institution

DBM.....Darwin Barker Museum

CHS.....Chautauqua County Historical Society

PLW.....Patterson Library in Westfield

SRL.....State University--Reed Library

DFO.....Dunkirk-Fredonia Evening Observer (newspaper)

PPL.....Prendergast Public Library, Etc....

Not all of these codes may be necessary. The above examples are mere theoretical possibilities. Certain sets of "union list" codes may already be used in some libraries where computer produced lists exist for other types of material. In that case the same codes should be used for photographs to the extent of feasibility. The participating agencies should agree on one set of standard location codes and use them systematically for the location designation of all types of material in the county. To achieve standardization, a county coordinator, who oversees and perhaps designs the systems, should be assigned.

The effectiveness of computer indexing can suffer greatly from hasty and poorly designed manual systems. It is particularly true in the case of subject heading preparations. For instance,

the inversion of secondary subject headings, if systematically done by a computer method, can often result in an incomplete, if not incoherent, or meaningless subject heading, also called as "cross indexing." Carefully assigned secondary and tertiary subject headings, specifically designed for computer programming, can considerably improve the usefulness of computer indexing. Subject heading assignment is particularly important for photographs, as access to the collection is mostly gained through subject entries. Title or photographer entries are seldom used for photo retrieving. A well prepared computer index can be extremely valuable and, therefore, it is strongly recommended. Once it is set up, it is more economical, the updating is simpler, and the reproduction possibilities of it are virtually limitless when compared with that of an "old-fashioned" manual card file or list.

## COPYRIGHT AND COPYING OF PHOTOGRAPHS

In closing, some user oriented queries should be brought to light. Of these, the most problematic issue is the question of copyright. It is commonly believed that a large percentage of historic photographs is in the public domain. This is true particularly of nineteenth and early twentieth century photographs that were either never copyrighted or the maximum of fifty-six years of copyright permission has expired. Therefore, the photograph holding library should determine

the nature of permission as applied by "fair use" policy, and the one time use of "ownership" rights. The decision should be based on the detailed knowledge of the new copyright law and the awareness of the patron's intended use of the copy print. The 1978 copyright revision clarified many ambiguous rules, yet the everyday practices under special circumstances, particularly for more recent photographs, have to be solved on the spot by all parties involved. Therefore, familiarity with the new regulations is mandatory.[24]

For successful copying from negatives of all sorts and from positive images the expertise of a professional photographer is necessary. He is knowledgeable about the physical and chemical properties of the negatives and originals and will treat them with proper care. He knows what size enlargements produce sharp images even after numerous reproductions. He realizes that quality is the trademark of professionality and with this he helps to enhance the value of the photograph collection. He is also in the right position to assign fair price to fine copy prints. To his charge, a reasonable user's fee or processing and handling cost should be added by the library that may help to maintain a self-supporting collection.

Furthermore, public awareness can be nurtured in many different ways. Producing prints, postcards, and pamphlets of special groups of photographs that can be sold at various tourist stops can be a profitable way to expose the public to

historical photographs that are the pride of a rich heritage of a locality. Exhibits should likewise be organized frequently. These exhibits should be centered around special events of the locality, to celebrate historical dates, and to serve as educational supplements to school curriculums. Occasional traveling exhibits can be designed to proliferate the interest of several localities. It is important to keep in mind that the use and the usefulness makes a local history photograph collection increasingly more valuable to its community. Indeed, without adequate usefulness, and without proper use, the need for the financial sacrifice, and the sacrifice of time and effort that is required to organize and preserve any group of photographs is a matter of serious concern.

Photographs, like so many art objects and information preservation elements, are integral parts of our daily lives. No better words can describe this fact than the following ones by Hilton Kramer:

> When the history of the visual arts in the 1970's comes to be written, surely one of the central developments to be taken into account will have to be the new artistic status that has been accorded to photography in this decade. No other change in our artistic affairs has been as decisive, I think, as this one. From a precarious place on the margin of high culture, photography has moved to

the center, and it now shows every sign of remaining there. Museums, art galleries and book publishers have felt the pressure of this change and have revised their policies accordingly.[25]

With further developments of photographic techniques, photographs will be even more profusely produced in the future. New methods are sought with support of modern age technology. Such developments as "electronic color prints made with laser beams" offer an almost limitless future for photography. Faded photographic images can now be restored by nuclear chemistry techniques. Some photographers revive the old, turn of the century, simple methods to create a new style of soft, artictic images.[26] The camera industry is determined to put a camera into the hands of any interested citizen around the world. Soon, there will be an unlimited wealth of photographs of all levels of value and importance. Photograph holding libraries and historical societies will find that the systematic organization of their collection is inevitable if they are to maintain a meaningful and continuously growing collection. Clearly, it is the responsibility of the present generation to make a commitment for the organization of valuable photographs that have been passed down to us from the past. Once a well organized system is available, the new acquisitions can be integrated easily to form a lasting, integral part of the history of humanity.

FOOTNOTES

1. A good summary of the evolution of photography is found in the introductory chapter of Robert A. Weinstein and Larry Booth, COLLECTION, USE, AND CARE OF HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPHS (Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1977).

2. One of the best recent two part articles on photograph collection organization is by Renata V. Shaw, "Picture Organization--Practices and Procedures." SPECIAL LIBRARIES part I 63:448-456 (Oct. 1972), part II 63:502-508 quotation at p.502.

3. Linda Johnson, "Yukon Archives Visual Photograph Finding Aid." ARCHIVARIA 5:113 (Winter 1977-1978).

4. The three major objectives appear in Max J. Evans, "Handling Photographs in the Latter-Day Saints Church Archives." AMERICAN ARCHIVIST 40:174 (Apr. 1977).

5. Wisconsin Historical Society: Paul Vanderbilt, FILING YOUR PHOTOGRAPHS: SOME BASIC PROCEDURES (Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1966.Technical Pamphlet number 36).
Newark Public Library: Karen D. Gilbert, PICTURE INDEXING FOR LOCAL HISTORY MATERIALS (Monroe, N.J.: Library Research Association, 1973).

University of Oklahoma Library: Jane Howe, "Cataloging a Photograph Collection," OKLAHOMA LIBRARIAN, 13:8-12 (Jan.1963). In : Jean Spealman Kujoth, READINGS IN NONBOOK LIBRARIANSHIP (Metuchen: Scarecrow Press, 1968).

Wells Fargo Bank: Irene Simpson, "Pictures for Public Relations," SPECIAL LIBRARIES 56:39-40 (Jan. 1965). In: Kujoth, READINGS IN NONBOOK LIBRARIANSHIP.

Andrew H. Eskind and Deborah Barsel, International Museum of Photography at George Eastman House, "Conventions for Cataloguing Photographs," IMAGE 21 (Dec. 1978). (The author used the original cataloging procedures that was made available on preliminary computer print-out, which preceded the published article.)

Note: Cataloging and organization procedures that are discussed in these cited articles were used by the author to various degree. In several cases only one certain aspect of a point of procedure was implied in the author's own method.

6. David Matteson and Saundra Sherman, "Cataloging Historical Photographs with ISBD (NBD)," ARCHIVARIA 5:101-111 (Winter 1977-1978).

7. For the general organization and cataloging of historical photographs see items cited in footnotes 2, 5, and 6 particularly. In addition, the following articles are useful:

Ralph E. Ehrenberg, "Aural and Graphic Archives and Manuscripts," DREXEL LIBRARY BULLETIN 11:55-68. (Jan. 1975).

Klaus B. Hendrick, "The Preservation of Photographic Record," ARCHIVARIA 5:92-100 (Winter 1977-1978).

Evelyn Hensel, "Treatment of Non-Book Material," LIBRARY TRENDS 2:187-198 (Oct. 1953).

May D. Hill, "Prints, Pictures and Photographs," LIBRARY TRENDS 4:156-163 (Oct. 1955).

Richard J. Hujda, "Photographs and Archives in Canada," ARCHIVARIA 5:3-16 (Winter 1977-1978).

Camilla P. Luecke, "Photograph Library Procedures," SPECIAL LIBRARIES 47:455-461 (Dec. 1956).

Eleanor Mitchell, "The Photographic Collection and its Problems," COLLEGE AND RESEARCH LIBRARIES 3:176-182 (Mar. 1942).

Richard Pare, "Creating the Photograph Record: The United States Court House Project," ARCHIVARIA 5:78-91 (Winter 1977-1978). While not dealing with the organization or cataloging of a collection, this article illustrates the type of projects that can be generated for historic preservation through photographs.

Donald Pieters, "Handling Photograph Collection by Coordinate Indexing," SPECIAL LIBRARIES 66:541-542 (Nov. 1975).

Stanley Rice, "Picture Retrieval by Concept Coordination," SPECIAL LIBRARIES 59:627-634 (Dec. 1969).

L.C. Tansey, "Classification of Research Photographs and Slides," LIBRARY TRENDS 23:417-426 (Jan. 1975).

Maine. History Media Center, PHOTOGRAPH PROJECT. (Interim Report, Unpublished Document, 1978).

8. Luecke, "Photograph Library Procedures," p.457.

9. Ehrenberg, "Aural and Graphic Archives..." p.58.

10. The problems of erroneous information were very well exhibited by Walter Rundell in "Photographs as Historical Evidence: Early Texas Oil," AMERICAN ARCHIVIST 41:373-398 (Oct. 1978).

11. Mattison and Sherman, "Cataloging Historical Photographs..." p.102-103.

12. Lois Mai Chan, "Alphabetical Arrangement and Subject Collocation in Library of Congress Subject Headings," LIBRARY RESOURCES AND TECHNICAL SERVICES 21:156-169 (Spring 1977). In this lengthy article Chan describes the two major systems of subject classification devised by Cutter and the Library of Congress, and exposes the numerous problems that are inherent in both systems. Abundant examples are used to display the inconsistencies and other shortcomings of the Library of Congress Classification system.

13. Howe, "Cataloging a Photograph Collection," p.358.

14. Enid T. Thompson, LOCAL HISTORY COLLECTIONS, A MANUAL FOR LIBRARIANS (Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1978) p.54-55.

15. This idea was also suggested by Shaw, "Picture Organization..." pt.2, p.504.

16. Eskind and Barsel, "Conventions for cataloguing Photographs," p.6.

17. Supportive information is found in Luecke, "Photograph Library Procedures" p.456-457; Ehrenberg, "Aural and Graphic Archives..." p.61; Vanderbilt, FILING YOUR PHOTOGRAPHS, [p.6.]; Shaw, "Picture Organization..." p.505.

18. This information was cited in an unpublished graduate paper by Sylvia Finch, entitled: "Implementation and Potentials for a County Image Catalogue." Miss Finch used the first draft of the author's paper to inaugurate the organization of the photograph collection at the Fenton Historical Society in Jamestown, Chautauqua County. In the present revised edition several additions and corrections were made as suggested by Miss Finch.

19. The following authors who are cited in this bibliography, deal specifically with proper storage facilities for photographs: Ehrenberg, Hill, Thompson, Vanderbilt, and Weinstein.

20. Carl M. Spaulding, "Kicking the Silver Habit: Confession of a Former Addict," AMERICAN LIBRARIES 9:653-656 (Dec. 1978). This article deals with the sometimes questionable archival

quality of certain microfilms. It compares silver halide with non-silver--diaso and vesicular films and their pattern of durability under certain circumstances.
William J. Myrick, "Access to Microforms, A Survey of Failed Efforts," LIBRARY JOURNAL 103:2301-2304 (Nov. 15, 1978).
This article is concerned with the "lost" information hidden on microforms in libraries that provide poor indexing or no indexing to them.

21. William Saffady, "Microfilm Equipment and Retrieval Systems for Library Picture Collections," SPECIAL LIBRARIES 65:440-444 (Oct.-Nov. 1974).
The Evans article, "Handling Photographs," is helpful if one is interested in a well functioning film library of photographs, like that of the Latter-Day Saints Church Archives.
Another article, though a rather early one,can also be valuable: Agnes Henerby, "Preservation of Photographs on Microfilm: An Experiment." SPECIAL LIBRARIES 47:451-457 (Dec. 1956).

22. The visible image file in the Public Archives in Canada has been cited by Shaw in "Picture Organization..." on p.450. On p.502 she explains the production of simple visual catalog cards. The Evans article, "Handling Photographs," is another good example on the effectiveness of visible image files for photographs.

23. Johnson, "Yukon Archives..." p.115.

24. Besides the author's own interpretation of the problems of copyright, the following sources offered helpful information: Weinstein, COLLECTION USE, AND CARE OF HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPHS, p.88-91 provides an excellent summary point by point. Juan R. Freudenthal, "The Slide as a Communication Tool: A State-of-the-Art Survey" in EXPENDING MEDIA, edited by Deirdre Boyle (Phoenix: Oryx Press, 1977). Although, this chapter deals with slides mostly, there is a very useful paragraph on the problems of copyright pertaining to photographs as well. Helen Faye, "May We Use This Picture?--Rights and Permission." SPECIAL LIBRARIES 56:367-372 (Jan. 1965). This article is helpful to develop awareness of possible problems of libels. Donald F. Johnson, COPYRIGHT HANDBOOK (New York:Bowker, 1978) is one of the best sources that can be used to explicate the rules of the new copyright law. The new revision of the copyright law has been profusely discussed in numerous other sources.

25. Hilton Kramer, "The Rise of Photography as Fine Art," THE NEW YORK TIMES (Apr. 8, 1979 Section D) p.33, 40.

26. Peggy Selfon, "Electronic Color Prints Made with Laser Beams," THE NEW YORK TIMES (Mar. 11, 1979, Section D) p.41, 43. "The Young Romantics" NEWSWEEK 93:100. (Mar. 19, 1979). Barbara S. Askins, David S. Speich, Marion Y. Whitings, "A Nuclear Chemistry Technique for Restoring Faded Photographic Images," AMERICAN ARCHIVIST 41:207-213 (Apr. 1978).